

Message Text

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12

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 OC-06 CCO-00 SY-10 OPR-02 A-01 RSR-01

RSC-01 /034 W

----- 067956

R 260255Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4405

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 5545

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ACOM, ASEC, AEMR, AFSP, AF

SUBJ: KABUL'S E&E RADIO NET

DEPT FOR NEA/EX FOR HUNT, SY FOR GENTILE, OPR/WLG FOR MCDONNEL,
OC FOR NAEHER, BEIRUT FOR RCO FROM KELLY

1. EVENTS OF LAST WEEK PROVED NOT ONLY THE VULNERABILITY OF CERTAIN
AFGHAN INSTITUTIONS BUT HIGHLIGHTED TO AN EMBARRASSING DEGREE
THE UTTER UNRELIABILITY, IMPRACTICALITY AND UNWORTHINESS OF
OUR SO-CALLED E&E RADIO NETWORK. IT IS PRE-TRANSISTOR, OLD
FASHIONED, JURY RIGGED, WORN OUT, WASHED UP AND MUST BE JUNKED
AND REPLACED - NOW.

2. WE HAVE LEARNED A LESSON THE HARD WAY. HERE WE WERE,
IN A REMOTE REGION OF PLANET EARTH, IN THE MIDDLE OF A COUP
AND ALMOST UNABLE TO COMMUNICATE ONE WITH ANOTHER. THE FIRST
THING THE COUPSTERS DID WAS TO DISCONNECT THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM
(FOR SIX DAYS). SIMULTANEOUSLY THEY SHUT DOWN THE TELEGRAPHIC
SYSTEM. THEN THEY CLOSED THE AIRPORT. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR OUR
TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN TOTALLY INEFFECTIVE.

3. WHAT WE EXPERIENCED DURING THOSE SEVEN DAYS IS REALLY
NOTHING NEW - AT LEAST SINCE LAST AUGUST, RADIO VOICE
COMMUNICATIONS AT KABUL HAS BEEN A SOMETIMES THING. SINCE THE
FIRST THREAT AGAINST THE AMBASSADOR IN DECEMBER 1972 WE HAVE
TRIED TO REVIVE OUR EMPHYSEMATIC E&E VOICE NET. IN THE GREAT
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TRADITION OF THE SERVICE WE HAVE TRIED, AS USUAL PARSIMONIOUSLY,

TO MAKE DO AND MUDDLE THROUGH. WE EVEN HAD A RADIO EXPERT OVER FROM DELHI ONCE** ALL THIS PATCHWORK EFFORT ON OUR SO-CALLED E&E NET HAS NOT ONLY PERPETUATED AN UNRELIABLE, USELESS SYSTEM AND IN THE PROCESS ALLOWED A MESMERIZING TENDENCY TO EXIST GIVING US A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY WHICH IN THE BRIGHT LIGHT OF LAST WEEK'S REALITY COULD HAVE BEEN SERIOUS OR EVEN FATAL.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE USAID NET (SEPARATE FROM OURS) IS ALIVE AND WELL, THANK GOD. HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR ITS EXCELLENCE AND RELATIVE PLENITUDE WE WOULD HAVE BEEN, SIR, UP THE CREEK WITHOUT A PADDLE IN A LEAKY CANOE HAD EVENTS MOVED DIFFERENTLY THAN THEY HAD.

5. WE ARE IN YOUR HANDS. WE WILL ACCEPT THE SAGACIOUS JUDGEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT AS TO WHAT KIND OF NEW AND MODERN EQUIPMENT IS BEST CALLED FOR. PLEASE ACCEPT OUR JUDGEMENT, THEREFORE, THAT THIS IS WHAT WE NEED:

A. BASE STATIONS, - FIVE (5): CHANCERY, USAID, USIS, PEACE CORPS, RESIDENCE.

B. REPEATER UNIT/SITES: ONE OR MORE.

C. MOBILE UNITS - THIRTEEN (13): VEHICLES OF AMBASSADOR, DCM, DATT, AIRA, MEDICAL DOCTOR, ALL POOLED VEHICLES AND SY OFFICER'S PERSONAL CAR.

D. PORTABLE PR-36 UNITS - SEVENTY ONE (71): AMB, DCM, USAID (4), POL (5), ECON, DATT (4), PAO (2), ADMIN, GSO, SY, DUTY OFFICER, DUTY SECRETARY, DUTY CRU, DUTY TCU, HOSPITAL (4), PC(2), CONSUL, DEA/ATT, MARINE HOUSE (2), NCOIC, E&E WARDENS (25), SPARES (10).

E. ONE REAL LIVEWIRE AMERICAN RADIO TECHNICIAN WHO WOULD KNOW HOW TO MAINTAIN THE ABOVE EQUIPMENT - PERHAPS ON MILITARY COMPLEMENT.

6. WE HAVE NO MEANS TO FUND THE ABOVE REQUEST. IN VIEW OF OUR EXPERIENCE LAST WEEK AND THE STILL UNSETTLED SITUATION, CAN THIS

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BE IMMEDIATELY FUNDED FROM "EMERGENCIES IN THE DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE" APPROPRIATION? THIS IS A REAL EMERGENCY.

7. PLEASE ADVISE ASAP.
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